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ABSTRACT

Approximately 700 questionnaires were mailed, and 365 usable responses obtained, in a study of persons who had inquired about the State University of Nebraska (SUN) spring 1975 telecourse offerings but who did not enroll. This working paper and executive summary compare the questionnaire respondents to SUN's fall 1975 learner population in terms of the demographic information requested on the questionnaire. These comparisons are presented in an effort to examine whether non-enrollees have attributes different in the aggregate from enrollees. The demographic information includes age and sex distributions, educational achievement, marital and family status, and job title or duties. Reasons cited for non-enrollment include the following: cost of tuition, personal daily schedule, lead time, cost of instructional kit, non-interest in courses, and "other" reasons. The non-enrollment questionnaire is appended. (LBH)

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AN EXPLORATION INTO REASONS FOR NON-ENROLLMENT IN SUN COURSES AFTER REQUESTING INFORMATION ABOUT SUN

Executive Summary No. 6

Office of
Research and Evaluation

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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HE 010 428

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University of Mid-America

May, 1975

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This paper has been prepared as a Summary of work on this topic. For elaboration of the work summarized herein, the reader is urged to consult the Working Papers cited in this document. Working Papers may be obtained by writing the Office of Public Affairs and Information Services, P.O. Box 82006, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68501.

AN EXPLORATION INTO REASONS FOR NON-ENROLLMENT IN SUN COURSES AFTER REQUESTING INFORMATION ABOUT SUN[1]

Introduction

Enrollment of significant numbers of learners is of utmost importance to both the State University of Nebraska (SUN) and the University of Mid-America (UMA). Both SUN and UMA are committed to providing educational opportunities to adults who might otherwise not have access to higher education. Given that SUN is committed to serving the educational needs of the adult population of Nebraska, the number of learners enrolled in SUN courses may be taken as one measure of the service SUN provides. Given that UMA is committed to serving the educational needs of the adult population of the consortium region, the number of learners enrolled in SUN courses may be indicative of future reponse to UMA courses throughout that region.

While number of enrolled learners has been mentioned as an internal criterion of "success," it is also true that a number of enrolled learners is a common external criterion of "success." Naturally, the income that results directly from learner enrollments is of importance to SUN/UMA. As more learners enroll in SUN/UMA courses, both SUN and UMA move more toward financial stability and independence.

The immediacy of the enrollment issue became evident when a total of three hundred and sixty-three (363) individuals enrolled in the four courses offered through SUN during the Spring of 1975. This enrollment was

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[1]The results of this study are contained in an Office of Research and Evaluation Working Paper Entitled An Exploration Into Reasons for Non-Enrollment in SUN Courses After Requesting Information About SUN. This Executive Summary highlights some of the major points of that Working Paper. It should be noted that while certain tables are included in this abstract to highlight major points, the summaries and conclusions presented are based on all of the data which is more extensively tabulated and reported in the larger paper.

unexpected since enrollments for two courses offered in the Fall totaled seven hundred and fourteen (714).

Because enrollment of learners is of such importance, a survey was undertaken by the UMA Office of Research and Evaluation. The survey was aimed at determining the reasons for non-enrollment in Spring SUN course offerings. The rationale for the study was that if reasons for non-enrollment could be determined, and if factors underlying those reasons were under SUN/UMA control, every attempt would be made to eliminate those obstacles in future SUN/UMA course deliveries. Similarly, if reasons for non-enrollment were found to be outside SUN/UMA control, we would have a better idea of the constraints that would limit future enrollments in SUN/UMA course offerings.

During the Spring of 1975, four courses were offered through SUN: Accounting I, second offering; Introductory Psychology, second offering; Making It Count, first offering; and Consumer Experience, first offering. While a total of three hundred and sixty-three individuals had enrolled in the Spring course offerings, approximately seven hundred other individuals had requested information about SUN's Spring course offerings but had not subsequently enrolled in SUN courses. It was felt that these seven hundred voluntary requests for information represented a real interest in the SUN program. It was further inferred that these seven hundred individuals represented realistic potential enrollees for SUN. Consequently, it was determined that we should explore the reasons for their non-enrollment in SUN offerings.

Between March 25th and March 26th, approximately seven hundred short questionnaires were mailed to individuals who had requested information about SUN's Spring course offerings, but had not enrolled in a SUN course

to date. As of April 16, a total of 365 useable returns, approximately 52% of those sent out, were returned.

Summary of the Demographic Information

Information on Age, Sex, Education, Marital and Family Status, and Job Status of the 365 respondents to the questionnaire to non-enrollees was tabulated and compared to similar information on SUN's Fall learner population. These comparisons were made to determine the existence of systematic differences between the two populations.

The data indicated that the responding sample was younger than the Fall group of SUN's student learners. While a slightly higher percentage of males were represented in the responding sample, the responses were dominated by females.

In general, the data indicate that the responding sample had a substantially higher educational achievement level than the Fall learner population. A substantially smaller percentage of the responding sample indicated that they were married with mostly grown children. While a higher percentage of the responding sample had either part or full time employment, a lower percentage of those responding were homemakers.

Reasons for Non-Enrollment

General Discussion

One page of the questionnaire sent to those who requested information about SUN asked that they indicate the reason(s) for their non-enrollment in SUN courses. Possible reasons for non-enrollment were listed in a checklist format. Eleven specific reasons for non-enrollment were listed, along with one alternative which allowed respondents to write in other reasons.

Each questionnaire recipient was asked to place a check (√) in front of the reason (or reasons) why he/she decided not to enroll in a SUN course. If an individual selected more than one reason for not enrolling, he/she was asked to place an "X" by the most important reason. Table 1 lists the reasons selected by respondents in order of the total frequency of choice (disregarding whether marked with a "√" or an "X").

The most frequently chosen reasons for not enrolling in SUN courses were the following: the high cost of tuition, various "other" reasons, the lack of time in their daily schedules, and the short lead time between receiving information and the start of classes. Each of these reasons was chosen by over 20% of the responding sample. The next two most frequently chosen reasons were chosen by 17% and 14% of the responding sample of 365 persons. These two choices concerned the high cost of the instructional kit and non-interest in the courses offered, respectively.

The least frequently selected reasons for not enrolling in SUN courses were chosen by from 3% to 9% of those responding. These six choices concerned the distance from the nearest learning center, the fact that courses were to continue into the Summer, the weekly TV segments fulfilling their information needs, the viewing of a TV segment and deciding the course was not desirable, the desire to take a class with more frequent in-person contact with faculty, and the desire to take a course in a formal classroom setting.

Considering the cost factor (both the cost of tuition (36%) and the cost of the instructional kit (17%), 53% indicated cost as a reason for non-enrollment. Some respondents indicated that the lead time provided interacted with the cost factor, i.e., if they had been given enough lead

Table 1. Reasons for not enrolling in a SUN course after requesting information about SUN.

Reason	Percent of Responding Sample (N=365) Selecting Each Reason
The cost of tuition was too high	36%
Other reasons for not enrolling	28%
My personal daily schedule would not permit me	27%
After I received information about SUN, I didn't have time to decide to enroll before classes began	22%
The cost of the instructional kit was too high	17%
The courses offered did not interest me	14%
I thought I was located too far from the nearest learning center	9%
The course continued into the Summer	8%
I watched a TV segment of one of the SUN courses and decided that watching the weekly TV segments provided enough information for my needs.	7%
I watched a TV segment of one of the SUN courses and decided that the course was not really what I had in mind	4%
I would rather take a course in which I could have frequent in-person contact with faculty	3%
I would rather take a course in a formal classroom setting	3%
*Total	178%

*The total is more than 100% because we disregarded whether reasons were marked with a check (✓) or with an "X".

time they might have been able to make arrangements for payment. Included in this number are some respondents who were concerned about whether Veteran's Benefits would cover tuition costs and some workers who wondered whether their employers would cover costs. Others indicated that because they had little time, given their daily schedules, they did not believe that they could devote enough time to a course to justify the expenditure. Others indicated that they could take a comparable course for a smaller cost at a local community college or university. Some indicated that because they did not desire to take the courses for credit they did not believe the cost of tuition was merited and therefore chose not to enroll, although many indicated that they were following the TV segments and the newspaper inserts. In fact, 7% of the responding sample indicated that they found the TV segments satisfied their information needs.

It therefore appears that the cost factor is the most important reason for not enrolling in SUN courses. Furthermore, it appears that other reasons for not enrolling (e.g., not wanting to take the courses for credit, not knowing whether Veteran's Benefits covered the costs), respondent's personal daily schedules, and the lead time between receiving information about SUN course offerings and the beginning of classes, all interact in some way with the cost factor.

Table 2 lists the reasons for not enrolling in SUN courses together with both the percentage of those responding with a "✔" and the percentage of those responding with an "X". A check (✔) indicates that the reason chosen was the most important factor in deciding not to enroll in a SUN course. Table 2 indicates that the rank order of the four most important reasons for not enrolling remains exactly the same: the high cost

Table 2. Relative importance of reasons for not enrolling in a SUN course after requesting information about SUN.

Reason	Percent of Responding Sample Checking (✔) a Reason	Percent of Responding Sample Marking an "X"
The cost of tuition was too high	14%	22%
Other reasons for not enrolling	14%	14%
My personal daily schedule would not permit me	13%	14%
After I received information about SUN, I didn't have time to decide to enroll before classes began	9%	13%
The cost of the instructional kit was too high	10%	7%
The courses offered did not interest me	6%	8%
I thought I was located too far from the nearest learning center	7%	2%
The course continued into the Summer	6%	3%
I watched a TV segment of one of the SUN courses and decided that watching the weekly TV segments provided enough information for my needs	6%	2%
I watched a TV segment of one of the SUN courses and decided that the course was not really what I had in mind	3%	1%
I would rather take a course in which I could have frequent in-person contact with faculty	2%	1%
I would rather take a course in a formal classroom setting	3%	---
*Total	93%	**Total 87%

* Total is less than 100% because not every respondent chose more reason than their most important reason.

** Total is less than 100% because not every respondent indicated their most important reason.

of tuition, various "other" reasons, the lack of time in their daily schedules, and the short lead time between receiving information about SUN and the start of classes. These reasons, then, appear to be the most important reasons for non-enrollment

Summary of Reasons for Non-Enrollment

The reasons given for not enrolling in SUN course offerings by 365 respondents to the questionnaire to non-enrollees were tabulated and analyzed. These data were collected in order to determine what the barriers to enrollment were.

The six most frequently chosen reasons for non-enrollment are listed below in order of their frequency of choice:

1. The cost of tuition was too high;
2. "Other" reasons for not enrolling;
3. My personal daily schedule would not permit me to enroll:
4. After I received information about SUN, I didn't have time to decide to enroll before classes began;
5. The cost of the instructional kit was too high;
6. The courses offered did not interest me.

The reasons listed above accounted for 80% of the reasons for non-enrollment. Further analysis showed that the four most important reasons for non-enrollment were the following (listed in order of their frequency of choice):

1. The cost of tuition was too high;
2. "Other" reasons for not enrolling.
3. My personal daily schedule would not permit me to enroll;
4. After I received information about SUN, I didn't have time to decide to enroll before classes began.

The reasons listed above accounted for 72% of the reasons indicated as most important in deciding not to enroll in SUN courses.

The high cost of tuition stood out as the foremost reason for not enrolling in a SUN course. It alone was chosen by more than 20% of the responding sample as the most important reason for non-enrollment. Considering both the cost of tuition and the cost of the instructional kit as an overall cost factor, approximately 30% of the responding sample indicated that the cost factor was the most important reason for not enrolling. Further analysis of the second most important reason for not enrolling, "Other reasons for not enrolling," indicated that 20% of all the "other" responses were cost related. Furthermore, it appeared that still "other" reasons for not enrolling (e.g., not wanting to take the course for credit, not knowing whether Veteran's Benefits covered the costs), respondents personal daily schedules, and the lead time between receiving information about SUN course offerings and the start of classes, all interacted in some way with the cost factor.

The data indicate that some people who are interested in continuing their education and are therefore potential SUN enrollees simply do not have extensive time available to devote to an educational activity. Clearly, time is an important consideration in deciding whether to enroll, but it is equally clear that this factor is largely outside SUN/UMA control. Therefore, it must be viewed as a constraint to enrollment in future course deliveries.

lead time provided between course information mailings and the start of SUN courses appeared to be a significant deterrent to enrollment. This is indicated not only by the percentage of people who indicated it as the

most important reason for not enrolling, but also by the fact that many of those choosing "other" indicated that SUN course information was either not enough for them to decide whether to enroll, or they never did receive the SUN course information. This particular barrier to enrollment is addressable by SUN.

AN EXPLORATION INTO REASONS FOR NON-ENROLLMENT IN SUN COURSES AFTER REQUESTING INFORMATION ABOUT SUN

Working Paper No. 6

Office of
Research and Evaluation

Patrick L. Walsh
University of Mid-America

May, 1975

This report was prepared pursuant to Grant #NIE-G-75-001 from the National Institute of Education to the University of Mid-America. This report does not necessarily represent the view of that agency.

Additional copies of this report, or an Executive Summary of this report, may be obtained from the Office of Public Affairs and Information Services, University of Mid-America, Box 82006, Lincoln, NE., 68501.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction. 1

Demographic Information 3
- Distribution of Ages. 4
- Distribution of Sexes 4
- Educational Achievement 5
- Marital and Family Status 6
- Job Title or Duties 6
- Summary of Demographic Information. 7

Reasons for Non-Enrollment. 8
- General Discussion. 8
- Cost of Tuition 13
- "Other" Reasons 13
- Personal Daily Schedule 16
- Lead Time 16
- Cost of Instructional Kit 17
- Non-Interest in Courses 17
- Remaining Reasons for Non-Enrollment. 19
- Summary of Reasons for Non-Enrollment 20

APPENDIX A - Non-Enrollment Questionnaire 23

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE		PAGE
1	Age Distribution of the responding sample and SUN's Fall learner	4
2	Distribution of sexes in the responding sample and in SUN's Fall learner population	5
3	Distribution of educational levels of the responding sample and SUN's Fall learner population	5
4	Marital and Family Status of the responding sample and SUN's Fall learner population.	6
5	Job Title or Duties of the responding sample and SUN's Fall learner population according to course enrolled in.	7
6.	Reasons for not enrolling in a SUN course after requesting information about SUN	9
7	Relative importance of reasons for not enrolling in a SUN course after requesting information about SUN.	12
8	Analysis of "other" reasons for not enrolling in a SUN course	14
9	Analysis of suggested course offerings	18

AN EXPLORATION INTO REASONS FOR NON-ENROLLMENT
IN SUN COURSES AFTER REQUESTING INFORMATION ABOUT SUN

Introduction

Enrollment of significant numbers of learners is of utmost importance to both the State University of Nebraska (SUN) and the University of Mid-America (UMA). SUN and UMA, as an operational education experiment, are committed to providing educational opportunities to adults who might otherwise not have access to higher education. Given that SUN is committed to serving the educational needs of the adult population of Nebraska, the number of learners enrolled in SUN courses may be taken as one measure of the service SUN provides. Given that UMA is committed to serving the educational needs of the adult population of the consortium region, the number of learners enrolled in SUN courses may be indicative of future response to UMA courses throughout that region.

While number of enrolled learners has been mentioned as an internal criterion of "success," it is also true that number of enrolled learners is a common external criterion of "success." Naturally, the income that results directly from learner enrollments is of importance to SUN/UMA. As more learners enroll in SUN/UMA courses, both SUN and UMA move more toward financial stability and independence.

The immediacy of the enrollment issue became evident when a total of three hundred and sixty-three (363) individuals enrolled in the four courses offered through SUN during the Spring of 1975. This enrollment was much lower than expected since enrollments for two courses offered in the Fall totaled seven hundred and fourteen (714).

Because enrollment of learners is of such importance, a survey was undertaken by the UMA Office of Research and Evaluation. The survey was aimed at determining the reasons for non-enrollment in SUN Spring course offerings. The rationale for the study was that if reasons for non-enrolment could be determined, and if factors underlying those reasons were under SUN/UMA control, every attempt would be made to eliminate those obstacles in future SUN/UMA course deliveries. Similarly, if reasons for non-enrollment were found to be outside SUN/UMA control, we would have a better idea of the constraints that would limit future enrollments in SUN/UMA course offerings.

During the Spring of 1975, four courses were offered through SUN: Accounting I, second offering; Introductory Psychology, second offering; Making It Count, first offering; and Consumer Experience, first offering. While a total of three hundred and sixty-three individuals enrolled in the Spring course offerings, approximately seven hundred other individuals requested information about SUN's Spring course offerings but did not subsequently enroll. It was felt that these seven hundred voluntary requests for information represented a real interest in the SUN program. It was further inferred that these seven hundred individuals represented realistic potential enrollees for SUN. Consequently, it was determined that we should explore the reasons for their non-enrollment in SUN courses. It was felt that if these individuals did indeed have a real interest in SUN, their responses to a query concerning non-enrollment would be more valid than might be expected from individuals who had not demonstrated a real interest in SUN. We also believed that we would get a fairly good response rate.

During the last week in March, approximately seven hundred short questionnaires (see Appendix A for actual form) were mailed to individuals who had requested information about SUN's Spring course offerings but had not enrolled in a SUN course to date. A self-addressed, postage-free return envelope was included with each questionnaire mailed. As of April 16, a total of 381 questionnaires had been returned. Of those, seven were returned as non-deliverable, seven were returned by individuals who had in fact enrolled in a SUN course, and two were returned with completed registration forms, including payment for tuition and fees, to enroll in SUN Spring offerings (one individual registered for two courses and the other individual registered for one course). Therefore, a total of 365 useable returns, approximately 52% of those sent out, were returned.

The remainder of this report is divided into two major sections. The first section compares the questionnaire respondents to SUN's Fall learner population, in terms of the demographic information requested on the second half of the questionnaire. These comparisons are presented in an effort to examine whether non-enrollees have attributes different in the aggregate from enrollees. The second section focuses on what people state as reasons for their non-enrollment, given their expressed interest in SUN course offerings.

Demographic Information

In comparing demographic information of respondents to this survey with that of Fall learners, insight can be obtained into whether there are systematic differences between those who enrolled in SUN courses, and those who chose not to enroll in SUN courses.

Distribution of Ages

Table 1 shows the age distribution of those responding to the survey, as compared to SUN's Fall group of student learners. Note that in all tables in this report, figures are rounded to the nearest percent. The table indicates that a disproportionately high percentage of returns was received from the 20-34 age group (50%, as compared with 36%), and a disproportionately low percentage of questionnaires was received from the 35-49 age group (30%, as compared with 40%). These data indicate that the responding sample is younger than the Fall group of SUN's student learners (53% of the responding sample was younger than 35 years old).

Table 1. Age distribution of the responding sample and SUN's Fall learners.

Age	Percent of Responding Sample (N=365)	Percent of SUN's Fall Learners* (N=600+)
Under 20	3%	2%
20-34	50%	36%
35-49	30%	40%
50-64	13%	19%
Over 64	2%	3%

*These learners took one of SUN's first two courses. The course offerings in Nebraska were advertised through radio, television, and newspapers.

Distribution of Sexes

Table 2 illustrates the sex distribution of those responding and that of SUN's Fall group of student learners. The table indicates that while a higher percentage of females responded to the questionnaire, a higher proportion of males responded to the questionnaire when compared with the

percentage of males enrolled in SUN's Fall offerings (32%, as compared with 21%). These data indicate that a higher percentage of males are represented in the responding sample than in the Fall group of SUN learners.

Table 2. Distribution of sexes in the responding sample and in SUN's Fall learner population.

Sex	Percent of Responding Sample (N=365)	Percent of SUN's Fall Learners (N=600+)
Male	32	21
Female	67	79

Educational Achievement

Table 3 compares the level of education of the responding sample with SUN's Fall learner population. It shows that whereas a smaller percentage of the responding sample had no more than a high school diploma (30%, as compared with 43%), a higher percentage had college degrees (17% as compared with 6%). In general, it appears that the responding sample has a substantially higher educational achievement level than the Fall learner population (51% having at least 1-3 years college, as compared with 37%).

Table 3. Distribution of educational levels of the responding sample and SUN's Fall learner population.

Education	Percent of Responding Sample	Percent of SUN's Fall Learners
Eleventh grade or less	3%	5%
Trade, Business School	13%	14%
High School	30%	43%
1-3 years College	27%	27%
College Degree	17%	6%
Graduate Degree	7%	4%

Marital and Family Status

Table 4 compares the marital and family status of the responding sample with that of the SUN Fall learner population. It illustrates that a larger percentage of the responding sample was single (18%, compared to 11%), and that a larger percentage was married with mostly young children (38%, compared with 31%). The table also shows that a substantially smaller percentage of the responding sample was married with mostly grown children (19%, compared with 39%). A slightly larger percentage of those responding were either widowed, divorced or separated (10%, compared with 6%). If we assume that a married person with mostly grown children would have more time to devote to an educational effort such as SUN, it appears that the responding sample would have substantially less time to devote to such an effort.

Table 4. Marital and Family Status of the responding sample and SUN's Fall learner population.

Marital and Family Status	Percent of Responding Sample	Percent of SUN's Fall Learner Population
Single	18%	11%
Married, no children	13%	13%
Married, mostly young children	38%	31%
Married, mostly grown children	19%	39%
Widowed, divorced, or separated	10%	6%

Job Title or Duties

Table 5 illustrates the occupational status of the responding sample compared to the occupational status of SUN Fall learners in both Accounting

and Psychology, who returned the Student Information Questionnaire. (Over 50% of those enrolled in SUN's Fall offerings returned the Student Information Questionnaires.) The table illustrates that a higher percentage of the responding sample had either part-time or full time employment than did Fall enrollees, (62%, compared with both 53% and 59%). A lower percentage of those responding were homemakers (28%, compared with both 33% and 41%). If we assume that a homemaker would have more time to devote to an educational effort such as SUN, it appears that the responding sample would have less time to devote to such an effort. If we further assumed that having either part or full time employment would reduce the probability of enrolling, the responding sample would have a slightly lower probability of enrolling in SUN.

Table 5. Job Title or Duties of the responding sample and SUN's Fall learner population according to course enrolled in.

Job	Percent of Responding Sample	Percent of Sun's Fall Learner Population	
		Accounting	Psychology
Unemployed/retired	4%	3%	1%
Homemaker	28%	33%	41%
Homemaker/Part-time job	6%	59%	53%
Full time job	56%		
Full time student	3%	3%	4%

Summary of the Demographic Information

Information on Age, Sex, Education, Marital and Family Status, and Job Status of the 365 respondents to the non-enrollment questionnaire was tabulated and compared to similar information on SUN's Fall learner

population. These comparisons were made to determine the existence of systematic differences between the two populations.

The data indicated that the responding sample was younger than the Fall Group of SUN's student learners. While a slightly higher percentage of males were represented in the responding sample, the responses were dominated by females.

In general, the data indicate that the responding sample had a substantially higher educational achievement level than the Fall learner population. A substantially smaller percentage of the responding sample indicated that they were married with mostly grown children. While a higher percentage of the responding sample had either part or full time employment, a lower percentage of those responding were homemakers.

Reasons for Non-Enrollment

General Discussion

One page of the questionnaire sent to those who requested information about SUN asked that they indicate the reason(s) for their non-enrollment in SUN courses. Possible reasons for non-enrollment were listed in a checklist format. Eleven specific reasons for non-enrollment were listed, along with one alternative which allowed respondents to write in other reasons. Each questionnaire recipient was asked to place a check (✓) in front of the reason (or reasons) why he/she decided not to enroll in a SUN course. If an individual selected more than one reason for not enrolling, he/she was asked to place an "X" by the most important reason. Table 6 lists the reasons selected by respondents in order of the total frequency of choice (disregarding whether marked with a "✓" or an "X").

Table 6. Reasons for not enrolling in a SUN course after requesting information about SUN.

Reason	Percent of Responding Sample (N=365) Selecting Each Reason
The cost of tuition was too high	36%
Other reasons for not enrolling	28%
My personal daily schedule would not permit me	27%
After I received information about SUN, I didn't have time to decide to enroll before classes began	22%
The cost of the instructional kit was too high	17%
The courses offered did not interest me	14%
I thought I was located too far from the nearest learning center	9%
The course continued into the Summer	8%
I watched a TV segment of one of the SUN courses and decided that watching the weekly TV segments provided enough information for my needs	7%
I watched a TV segment of one of the SUN courses and decided that the course was not really what I had in mind	4%
I would rather take a course in which I could have frequent in-person contact with faculty	3%
I would rather take a course in a formal classroom setting	3%
*Total	178%

*The total is more than 100% because we disregarded whether reasons were marked with a "✓" or with an "X".

The most frequently chosen reasons for not enrolling in SUN courses were the following: the high cost of tuition, various "other" reasons, the lack of time in their daily schedules, and the short lead time between receiving information and the start of classes. Each of these reasons was chosen by over 20% of the responding sample. The next two most frequently chosen reasons were chosen by 17% and 14% of the responding sample of 365 persons. These two choices concerned the high cost of the instructional kit and non-interest in the courses offered, respectively. Each of these six reasons will be discussed in turn later in this paper.

The least frequently selected reasons for not enrolling in SUN courses were chosen by from 3% to 9% of those responding. These six choices concerned the distance from the nearest learning center, the fact that courses were to continue into the Summer, the weekly TV segments fulfilling their information needs, the viewing of a TV segment and deciding the course was not desirable, the desire to take a class with more frequent in-person contact with faculty, and the desire to take a course in a formal classroom setting.

Considering the cost factor (both the cost of tuition (36%) and the cost of the instructional kit (17%)), 53% indicated cost as a reason for non-enrollment. Some respondents indicated that the lead time provided interacted with the cost factor, i.e., if they had been given enough lead time they might have been able to make arrangements for payment. Included in this number are some respondents who were concerned about whether Veteran's Benefits would cover tuition costs and some workers who wondered whether their employers would cover costs. Others indicated that because they had little time, given their daily schedules, they did

not believe that they could devote enough time to a course to justify the expenditure. Others indicated that they could take a comparable course for a smaller cost at a local community college or university. Some indicated that because they did not desire to take the courses for credit they did not believe the cost of tuition was merited and therefore chose not to enroll, although many indicated that they were following the TV segments and the newspaper inserts. In fact, 7% of the responding sample indicated that they found the TV segments satisfied their information needs.

It therefore appears that the cost factor is the most important reason for not enrolling in SUN courses. Furthermore, it appears that "other" reasons for not enrolling (e.g., not wanting to take the courses for credit, not knowing whether Veteran's Benefits covered the costs), respondents' personal daily schedules, and the lead time between receiving information about SUN course offerings and the beginning of classes, all interact in some way with the cost factor.

Table 7 lists the reasons for not enrolling in SUN courses together with both the percentage of those responding with a "✓" and the percentage of those responding with an "X". A "✓" indicates that the reason chosen was a contributing factor in deciding not to enroll, while an "X" indicates that the reason chosen was the most important factor in deciding not to enroll in a SUN course. Table 7 indicates that the rank order of the four most important reasons for not enrolling remains exactly the same: the high cost of tuition, various "other" reasons, the lack of time in their daily schedules, and the short lead time between receiving information about SUN and the start of classes. These reasons, then, appear to be the most important reasons for non-enrollment.

Table 7. Relative importance of reasons for not enrolling in a SUN course after requesting information about SUN.

Reason	Percent of Responding Sample Checking (✓) a Reason	Percent of Responding Sample Marking an "X"
The cost of tuition was too high	14%	22%
Other reasons for not enrolling	14%	14%
My personal daily schedule would not permit me	13%	14%
After I received information about SUN, I didn't have time to decide to enroll before classes began	9%	13%
The cost of the instructional kit was too hign	10%	7%
The courses offered did not interest me	6%	8%
I thought I was located too far from the nearest learning center	7%	2%
The course continued into the Summer	6%	3%
I watched a TV segment of one of the SUN courses and decided that watching the weekly TV segments provided enough information for my needs	6%	2%
I watched a TV segment of one of the SUN courses and decided that the course was not really what I had in mind	3%	1%
I would rather take a course in which I could have frequent in-person contact with faculty.	2%	1%
I would rather take a course in a formal classroom setting	3%	---
*Total	93%	**Total 87%

*Total is less than 100% because not every respondent indicated more than their most important reason.

** Total is less than 100% because not every respondent indicated their most important reason.

Cost of Tuition

The high cost of tuition stands out as the foremost reason for non-enrollment. It alone was chosen by more than 20% of the responding sample as the most important reason for non-enrollment.

Looking at the percentages of the responding sample who chose either the high cost of tuition (22%) or the high cost of the instructional kit (7%) as their most important reason for non-enrollment, approximately 30% indicated that the cost factor was most important in deciding not to enroll in SUN courses. To investigate this effect further, a crosstabulation was performed to determine what percentage of the responding sample indicated both the high cost of tuition and the high cost of the instructional kit as reasons for not enrolling. Fifteen percent of the responding sample had chosen both the high cost of tuition and the high cost of the instructional kit. Six percent indicated that both factors, taken together, were the most important reason for their not enrolling. It appears safe to conclude that cost was the over-riding concern in determining whether to enroll in a SUN course.

"Other" Reasons

As indicated in both Tables 6 and 7, the second most frequent response as the reason for non-enrollment was "other." Whereas Table 6 shows that 28% of the responding sample indicated that they had a reason (or reasons) for not enrolling other than those listed on the questionnaire, Table 7 illustrates that 14% of the responding sample indicated that other reasons for not enrolling were most important in their decision. The reasons that respondents wrote in are listed in Table 8, in order of their frequency of appearance.

Table 8. Analysis of "other" reasons for not enrolling in a SUN course.

Reason	Percent of Responding Sample Choosing "Other" (N=102) Specifying Each Reason
No or poor ETV reception	21%
Going to local community college/university cheaper than taking SUN course	15%
Involved in other educative activity at this time	12%
Do not desire credit, therefore do not desire to pay tuition	10%
Scheduling of ETV broadcasts poor	10%
SUN course information mailed not enough or never did receive SUN course information	9%
Wanted SUN course information for others	8%
Lack of money at time	8%
Time available for study does not justify cost	5%
Graduate credit not offered	5%
Courses do not count toward teacher certification/re-certification	5%
Unsure of Veteran's Benefits covering cost	4%
Moving from Nebraska	4%
Unsure of credit transferring	1%
Need for resident hours	1%
Courses do not fill requirements	1%
Secured a part-time job	1%
Desired Associate Degree Program	1%
Personal problems	1%
*Total	122%

*Total exceeds 100% because some respondents wrote in more than one reason for not enrolling.

It is interesting to note that of the five most frequently specified "other" reasons for non-enrollment, two are related to cost: going to local community college/university cheaper than taking SUN course; and do not desire credit, therefore do not desire to pay tuition. Those two reasons account for approximately 20% of all the "other" responses.

Table 8 also illustrates the fact that there are problems with the ETV broadcasts. Twenty-one percent of those choosing "other" indicated that they had either no or poor ETV reception on their televisions. Another 10% found the ETV broadcast schedule for SUN courses objectionable. Taken together, these two responses account for approximately 25% of all the responses in the "other" category. Of those responding that they received either no or poor ETV reception a large number lived in Omaha, a number lived in outstate Nebraska, and a few lived outside the state of Nebraska.

A desire for more advanced/specialized courses is indicated by the fact that 5% of those choosing "other" indicated that they desired courses that would count toward teacher certification/re-certification. This is not surprising given the fact that 24% of the responding sample had at least a college degree.

A short-coming in the SUN mailing materials is pointed out by the fact that 9% of those choosing "other" indicated that SUN course information was either not enough for them to decide whether to enroll, or they never did receive the SUN course information. Another 4% of those responding to the "other" question indicated that materials had no information concerning Veteran's Benefits. Inasmuch as providing more information to potential enrollees may produce more enrollments, it seems that course information mailings should be closely scrutinized.

Personal Daily Schedule

Clearly, an important consideration in deciding to enroll in a SUN course is an individual's personal daily schedule. This state of affairs is supported by the fact that in both Tables 6 and 7 the third most frequent reason for not enrolling in a SUN course was that the respondents' personal daily schedule would not permit them to enroll. We must face the fact that some people who are interested in continuing their education and are therefore potential SUN enrollees, simply do not have extensive time available to devote to an educational activity. Therefore, we must consider this factor as a constraint to enrollment in future course deliveries.

Lead Time

A short-coming in the SUN course information mailings is again pointed out by the fact that the fourth most frequently chosen reason for non-enrollment was that after receiving information about SUN, some respondents did not have time to decide to enroll before classes began. Twenty-two percent of the responding sample indicated the lack of lead time as a reason for non-enrollment. Thirteen percent indicated that the lack of lead time was the most important reason for non-enrollment. From these data, it appears that a substantial number of enrollments could be derived if only the information about SUN course offerings was mailed with more lead time provided before classes began. If this is the case, then a major effort should be made to inform potential enrollees of the start of classes far enough in advance of the start of classes in order to make necessary arrangements to take the course. Clearly, this reason for non-enrollment is one that SUN can take steps to eliminate as a reason for non-enrollment in future course offerings.

Cost of Instructional Kit

The fifth most frequent reason for non-enrollment, the high cost of the instructional kit, has been discussed earlier in conjunction with the high cost of tuition. Here it will suffice to say that a total of 17% of the responding sample indicated that it was a reason for their non-enrollment, and that of that 17%, 7% indicated that cost of the instructional kit was the most important reason for not enrolling.

Non-Interest in Courses

As demonstrated in both Tables 6 and 7, the sixth most frequent reason for not enrolling in a SUN course was that the courses offered did not interest the responding sample. While a total of 14% indicated that non-interest in the courses offered was a reason for their non-enrollment, 8% indicated that non-interest in the courses offered was the most important reason for not enrolling. If respondents indicated that the courses offered did not interest them, they were asked to name some courses that they might enroll in if they were offered by SUN in the future. Table 9 lists those courses in order of their frequency of appearance.

Table 9 illustrates that the responding sample does not have closely shared interests. There is a wide range in the subject matter of the courses suggested. The most frequent response (13%) indicated an interest in English courses, with most specifying English composition. If we consider Journalism/Fiction Writing with that category, 21% requested some form of writing course.

Tied for the second most frequently requested course were courses for teacher certification/re-certification and courses for graduate credit, each with 10% of the responses. These data indicate the fact that some

Table 9. Analysis of suggested course offerings.

Course	Percent of Responding Sample Choosing Non-interest in Course (N=53) Specifying Each Course
English (English Composition)	13%
Courses for Teacher Certification/Re-certification	10%
Courses for Graduate Credit	10%
History (Cultural History)	9%
Foreign Languages (French, German, Spanish)	9%
Advanced Accounting	8%
Journalism or Fiction Writing	8%
Gardening or Horticulture	8%
Art or Painting	8%
Interior Decorating	6%
Secretarial (Shortland)	6%
Nutrition	4%
Continuing Education for Nurses	4%
Animal Science	4%
Computer Language Courses	4%
Business	4%
Bookkeeping	4%
Pesticide Chemistry	2%
Home Nursing	2%
Basic Sciences	2%
Math	2%
Electronics	2%
Surveying	2%
Poetry	2%
Reading	2%
Industrial Engineering	2%
Personnel Management	2%
Sociology	2%
*Total	141%

*Total exceeds 100% because some respondents suggested more than one course.

potential enrollees seek more advanced and/or specialized courses. This fact is further supported by the requests for Advanced Accounting (8%), Continuing Education for Nurses (4%), and Computer Language Courses (4%). These requests are not surprising when we consider the fact that while 51% of the responding sample have at least 1-3 years of college, a full 24% have at least college degrees.

The rest of the suggested courses range from gardening through pesticide chemistry, and from reading through industrial engineering. It is almost impossible to find implications for courses to be developed other than courses in writing and advanced/graduate credit courses.

Remaining Reasons for Non-Enrollment

The remaining reasons for not enrolling specified on the questionnaire do not seem to merit further explanation since each was chosen by fewer than 10% of the responding sample. In fact, no more than 3% of the responding sample indicated that any of these reasons was most important in their decision not to enroll. It appears safe to say that having courses offered in a setting other than a formal classroom, where learners can have frequent in-person contact with faculty, is not a significant deterrent to enrollment. Neither does it appear that Spring courses continuing into the Summer, or proximity to the learning centers, had a significant effect on enrollment.

It is important to note that 6% of the responding sample indicated that although they had not registered for a SUN course, they were watching the weekly TV segments and/or reading the newspaper inserts. They are following the courses, and being served by SUN/UMA. Another 5% of the

responding sample indicated that they plan to enroll in SUN courses at a later date. Some of these respondents indicated that they plan to enroll in the Fall.

Summary of Reasons for Non-Enrollment

The reasons given for not enrolling in SUN course offerings by 365 respondents to the questionnaire to non-enrollees were tabulated and analyzed. These data were collected in order to determine what the barriers to enrollment were.

The six most frequently chosen reasons for non-enrollment are listed below in order of their frequency of choice:

1. The cost of tuition was too high;
2. "Other" reasons for not enrolling;
3. My personal daily schedule would not permit me to enroll;
4. After I received information about SUN, I didn't have time to decide to enroll before classes began;
5. The cost of the instructional kit was too high;
6. The courses offered did not interest me.

The reasons listed above accounted for 80% of the reasons for non-enrollment. Further analysis showed that the four most important reasons for non-enrollment were the following (listed in order of their frequency of choice):

1. The cost of tuition was too high;
2. "Other" reasons for not enrolling;
3. My personal daily schedule would not permit me to enroll;
4. After I received information about SUN, I didn't have time to decide to enroll before classes began.

The reasons listed above accounted for 72% of the reasons indicated as most important in deciding not to enroll in SUN courses.

The high cost of tuition stood out as the foremost reason for not enrolling in a SUN course. It alone was chosen by more than 20% of the responding sample as the most important reason for non-enrollment. Considering both the cost of tuition and the cost of the instructional kit as an overall cost factor, approximately 30% of the responding sample indicated that the cost factor was the most important reason for not enrolling. Further analysis of the second most important reason for not enrolling, "other" reasons for not enrolling, indicated that 20% of all the "other" responses were cost related. Furthermore, it appeared that still "other" reasons for not enrolling (e.g., not wanting to take the course for credit, not knowing whether Veteran's Benefits covered the costs), respondents personal daily schedules, and the lead time between receiving information about SUN course offerings and the start of classes, all interacted in some way with the cost factor.

The data indicate that some people who are interested in continuing their education and are therefore potential SUN enrollees simply do not have extensive time available to devote to an educational activity. Clearly, an individual's personal schedule is an important consideration in deciding whether to enroll, but it is equally clear that this factor is largely outside SUN/UMA control. Therefore, it must be viewed as a constraint to enrollment in future course deliveries.

Lead time provided between course information mailings and the start of SUN courses appeared to be a significant deterrent to enrollment.

This is indicated not only by the percentage of people who indicated it as the most important reason for not enrolling, but also by the fact that many of those choosing "other" indicated that SUN course information was either not enough for them to decide whether to enroll, or they never did receive the SUN course information. This particular barrier to enrollment is addressable by SUN.

APPENDIX A

Non-Enrollment Questionnaire

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA
P. O. BOX 82448 LINCOLN, NEBRASKA 68501 PHONE (402) 472-3387

Dear Fellow Citizen:

Recently you inquired about course offerings available through the State University of Nebraska (SUN). We notice that you did not enroll in a SUN course. We at SUN want to provide people with opportunities to learn in a way most convenient for them. To accomplish this, we need to know more about reasons why people decide not to enroll with SUN.

Please take a few moments to respond to the attached questions. You will be helping us to plan future educational offerings to best meet needs like yours. Your responses will be kept completely confidential.

After completing the questions, please return them in the enclosed postage-free envelope.

Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Milton J. Hassel, Dean
State University of
Nebraska

Listed below are a number of possible explanations for your not enrolling in SUN courses. Please check (✓) the reason (or reasons) why you decided not to enroll after you received information about SUN. If you selected more than one reason for not enrolling, place an "X" by the most important reason.

- ☐ The cost of tuition was too high.
- ☐ The cost of the instructional kit was too high.

- ☐ My personal daily schedule would not permit me.
- ☐ The course continued into the Summer.

- ☐ I would rather take a course in a formal classroom setting.
- ☐ I would rather take a course in which I could have frequent in-person contact with faculty.
- ☐ I thought I was located too far from the nearest learning center.

- ☐ After I received information about SUN, I didn't have time to decide to enroll before classes began.
- ☐ I watched a TV segment of one of the SUN courses and decided that watching the weekly TV segments provided enough information for my needs.
- ☐ I watched a TV segment of one of the SUN courses and decided that the course was not really what I had in mind.

- ☐ The courses offered did not interest me.
  If you checked the above reason, please name some courses you might sign up for if they were offered in the future.

- ☐ Other reasons for not enrolling (Please specify).

USE REVERSE SIDE FOR ADDITIONAL COMMENTS.

Your Age? ☐ Under 20 ☐ 20 - 34 ☐ 35 - 49 ☐ 50 - 64 ☐ 65 or over

Your Sex? ☐ Male ☐ Female

Highest Level Education Completed?

- ☐ 11th grade or less.
- ☐ High school graduate.
- ☐ Trade, Business or Technical school diploma.
- ☐ 1-3 yrs. college.
- ☐ College graduate (4 yrs.).
- ☐ Graduate degree.

Marital and Family Status?

- ☐ Single.
- ☐ Married, no children.
- ☐ Married, with mostly young children.
- ☐ Married, with mostly grown children.
- ☐ Widowed, divorced or separated.

Please indicate your main area of work by listing job title or duties.

- ☐ Homemaker.
- ☐ Other (Please specify).

We ask that you include your name and address below so that we may check your name off the list of those requesting information about SUN courses. All information provided on this questionnaire will be kept confidential.

Name _____

Address _____

_____

25